

CITY OF NEWARK
Newark, Delaware

TRAFFIC COMMITTEE MEETING

April 21, 2009

5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Chief Paul Tiernan, Carol Houck, Lt. George Stanko, Rich Lapointe, Marvin Howard, Dave Gula, Tom Parkins

Guests: Theodore Ryser, Newark Resident
Jean White, Newark Resident

1. REQUEST TO PERMIT BICYCLISTS TO USE THE SIDEWALK WHEN CROSSING THE S. COLLEGE AVENUE BRIDGE.

Chief Tiernan asked Mr. Ryser to speak in regard to the request to permit bicyclists to use the sidewalk when crossing the South College Avenue bridge.

Mr. Ryser said in the early 90's signs were posted to prohibit bicyclists from using the South College Avenue pedestrian bridge. Mr. Ryser said the storm drainage grates on the bridge significantly narrow an approximately 3' bike lane to 1 ½' bike lane in both directions. Mr. Ryser also indicated on the south side grade there is a large grate that nearly covers the entire bike lane. Mr. Ryser said in the early 90's when signs were posted to prohibit bicyclists from using the pedestrian bridge, the James Hall Trail was not in existence. Mr. Ryser said on the pedestrian bridge traveling northbound at the base of the bridge there is a cut out in the sidewalk to access Wollaston Avenue or Waterworks Lane without having to go out into the roadway. In order for a bicyclist heading northbound in the bike lane to access the James Hall Trail, one must stop and walk their bike over a 6-8' curb located at the bottom of the bridge. The other option to access the trail would be to stop at the bottom of bridge wait for traffic to clear in both directions and make a u-turn and take Old South College Avenue. Mr. Ryser suggested removing the old signs and installing new signs that bicyclists must walk their bike when pedestrians are present. Dave Gula said on most multi-use trails a common sign is "Bicyclists Must Yield to Pedestrians". Mr. Ryser said in the early 90's a bicyclist was injured at the base of the bridge and as a result, signs were erected to prohibit bicyclists from using the pedestrian bridge.

(Rich Lapointe and Lt. George Stanko joined the meeting at this time.)

Rich Lapointe said speeding in both directions on the bridge is a concern. Rich Lapointe said the bike lane is approximately 4' wide with 12' traffic lanes and suggested making a recommendation to DelDOT to widen the bike lanes to 5 ½' and narrow the traffic lanes to 10 ½'.

Dave Gula said he would support 11' bike lanes as some bicyclists may rather use the bike lane however, other bicyclists may feel safer to use pedestrian bridge. Dave Gula said only a few times throughout the year there is heavy pedestrian traffic on the bridge.

Mrs. Jean White indicated her husband was unable to attend today's meeting and shared a letter written by her husband in support of this request.

- 1) The joints in the road that connects the bridge with the approaching pavement on both sides are uneven. Mr. White indicates he hit the ridge unexpectedly which resulted in a flat tire.
- 2) There is debris in the bike lane that is not well maintained. Mr. White recalls on a separate occasion the debris on the bridge resulted in a flat tire.
- 3) The narrow bike lane and low wall barrier which is below the center of gravity for a bicyclist and it is frightening to be passed by a large truck with a fear of going over the barrier.

Dave Gula said that he is in favor of narrowing traffic lanes in the hopes this will slow traffic. Carol Houck said she supports the need for widening the bike lane and agreed that by narrowing the traffic lane this would be a form of traffic calming.

MOTION BY TOM PARKINS, SECONDED BY CAROL HOUCK TO CHANGE THE SIGNAGE ON THE SOUTH COLLEGE AVENUE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE TO READ, "BICYCLISTS MUST YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS".

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 7 TO 0.

MOTION BY RICH LAPOINTE, SECONDED BY CAROL HOUCK TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO DELDOT TO NARROW THE TRAFFIC LANE AND WIDEN THE BIKE LANE ON THE SOUTH COLLEGE AVENUE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 7 TO 0.

Dave Gula said 10 ½' traffic lanes would not be wide enough to include the side mirrors on large trucks and suggested making a recommendation to DelDOT for 11' traffic lanes.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chief Tiernan requested an update in regard to the Speed Management Workshop for Country Club Drive.

Dave Gula said a speed management workshop was held on Monday, April 20th to educate and gain public involvement in regard to the traffic calming process for Country Club Drive. Residents of Corbit Street were also invited to attend. Dave Gula said Cindy Genau (University of Delaware) has been working in conjunction with DelDOT in regard to national traffic safety. Dave Gula said the main components of speed management are education, enforcement and engineering.

Dave Gula said in this particular instance these components were applied directly to Country Club Drive. Dave Gula said the meeting began with a presentation by Cindy Genau on the national speed management movement. Next, a traffic engineer from DelDOT explained how traffic is managed in regard to speed and traffic congestion. Lt. Stanko spoke in regard to enforcement. Finally, Lisa Hatfield, Alderman explained the consequences of speeding and discussed the laws related to speeding. Dave Gula said at the intersection of Country Club Drive and Danbury Road one solution DelDOT discussed was a 6" graded extension (colored pressed concrete) into the roadway. Dave Gula said from New London Road approaching Danbury Road traffic will curve around a berm and stop with a painted line to that point with stop bars and crosswalks. A stop sign will be installed on New London Road at Windsor Drive. Dave Gula said WILMAPCO would assist in locating funds through DelDOT's transportation enhancement projects and that a 20% match of local funding would be required.

There being no further business, Chief Tiernan called for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION BY RICH LAPOINTE, SECONDED BY MARVIN HOWARD, TO ADJOURN.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 7 TO 0.

Paul M. Tiernan, Chairman